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A. D. GNAGEY, EDITOR.

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GOSSIP.

There is perhaps no more common fault among men and women than the habit of gossiping. It seems so natural to the majority of people to engage in some form of gossip that not a few look upon it as a sort of religious duty to talk about their neighbors. And yet the Bible declares, "Thou shalt not go up and down as tale-bearers." Strife, bickering and quarrels among neighbors, otherwise moral people, are very largely the result of this uncalled for gossip. Nor is this habit, as many suppose, confined to women only. Men are gossipers no less than women. It is amusing to hear men charge the women with this fault as though they were entirely free from it. When the minister of the Gospel raises his voice against this sin without mentioning either sex, the men apply it to the "weaker" sex in some such awkward expressions as this: "The women caught it to-day." A man comes home at 10 o'clock at night and if his wife happens to know something he *does not know*, he lays to her charge the fault of gossiping. And yet he spent an hour or two in some store-room, chewing and smoking with others, repeating foul, indecent stories, talking about every other man's wife in the neighborhood. We cheerfully give place in these columns for what the *Gospel News* has to say on this subject.

GOSSIP.

There seem to be so many people in the world who live for nothing higher than to know about their neighbors. It seems as though it came to be second nature, or rather first nature, and the principal business of life to know all the inside affairs, all the faults and failures and all the private matters of everybody possible, and knowing all this, to add whatever seems best to make a good story and send it out broadcast.

Men who have read this thus far will no doubt leave the rest of it as a matter of small interest; or if they read it through, will say, "That is good. I am glad the women are getting it now;" although nothing has been

said about either sex. It is remarkable how readily every one seems to take it for granted that a subject like this concerns women particularly. While this may be so to some extent, yet men come in for a good share, and it will not be hard to find those of the male sex who are anxious and ready and who seem to delight in gossip. If only the wounded hearts and blighted hopes and sadness that is caused by this common evil could be laid open so that those who are making it a business to gossip could see for themselves the terrible effects, it could not fail to touch the hardest hearts. People's lives are many times handicapped and their very best work hindered because of the poisoned tongue. We are not surprised at what James said: "The tongue can no man tame." We are rather surprised he did not add: "And it is likely one of the hardest tasks God has to do." This habit gets so grounded into a person that he seems to get nervous and ill at ease if he has not some sweet morsel of gossip to roll under his tongue and spread abroad among his bosom companions and friends. These bosom companions pass along the story with such little additions as their imagination can suggest.

As Christians we need to be on our guard that we do not encourage this by even listening to it. We ought to have the courage and principal to say immediately when anything of this kind is brought to our notice, "I do not care to hear it. I am willing to pray over the matter, however." Prayer over these things is the only help, the only way of adjusting or making the matter any better. The average gossip does not like to pray over such things. No wonder, either! But this is a wise course to take. This makes it possible for us to show our colors and stop as far as we are concerned, any further harm.

CROSS.

Some people are always cross; cross in the morning, cross at noon, cross at night, cross on Monday, cross on Saturday, constitutionally cross. It is not very hard for any of us to get that way; only a little let-down of one's watchfulness or having the stomach out of order, or not quite so smooth sailing in something, and the habit of getting cross is easy. Did you ever notice how the tone of a person's voice will impress you, what a difference it makes in your estimate of that person? We were much interested not long since in noticing the different tones through the telephone during the day. Some were pleasant, some were sharp, some cross, some impatient, some abrupt, some polite, some indifferent. A pleasant tone of voice through the telephone or in the office, at home, anywhere, counts; always

counts. A pleasant manner is one plan of working for Christ. A Christian ought to be pleasant, ought to be courteous and kind. The voice ought to be pleasant.

A short time ago we overheard two boys in a large mill talking about the foreman. One of them said: "I never saw such an old cross-patch as he is, anyhow." The other boy said: "That is so, although he does go to church and is a deacon. I don't want to be a Christian if a person has got to be such an old cross-patch as he is. I would hate to live in heaven with him."

It seems strange how easily we drift into ways that are so unfortunate for our influence as Christians. It certainly is worth while praying over and watching, for those around us are sure to take their cue from our lives, and we are liable to hinder many from coming into the kingdom by carelessness in this line.—*Gospel News*.

CONTINUE IN PRAYER.

It is easy to pray in the hour of anguish and distress. The wicked and the ungodly cry out in their time of sore need; but when the storm is past they cease to pray; when the calm comes they have no further occasion for supplication. But the child of God, who knows really the power and virtue of prayer, loves to "continue in prayer." He fills his mouth with arguments; he prays as taught by the Holy Ghost. He pours out his soul unto God. Day after day and year after year his supplications rise. He prays without ceasing; like the Son of God, who continued all night in prayer, the watchers of the night bear witness to his supplications, and the dawning of the morning finds him at the throne of grace.

Continue in prayer. Let the breath of prayer go up amid the turmoil of business, the oppression of care, the temptations that beset, and the trials that surround. Let prayer be made continually, and rise by day and night, and God will hear our prayers and help in time of need. Our prayers like vessels sent afar will bring back rich cargoes from distant lands; and when at last our prayers shall find their fullest answer in the kingdom of God we shall cease to pray and lift up our voices in notes of ceaseless praise.—Selected.

GIVE.

"Give as you would if an angel
Awaited your gift at the door;
Give as you would if to-morrow
Found you where waiting was o'er;
Give as you would to the Master
If you met His searching look;
Give as you would of your substance
If His hand your offering took."